

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/762,049

Applicant(s)

ALLEN ET AL.

Examiner

Phuong T. Bui

Art Unit

1638

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to interview of Sept 20, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 12 and 15-24.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date 9/20/05.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Kenneth Joung on September 20, 2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 12, line 4, "80%" was amended to -90%-.

Claims 13-14 have been canceled.

The above amendments were made to obviate potential enablement and written description issues under 35 USC 112, first paragraph.

2. Applicant's petition to correct inventorship under 37 CFR 1.48(b) filed September 23, 2005 has been granted. Inventors Allen and Thorpe have been deleted.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the claims are drawn to an isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide having sulfate permease activity, wherein the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence of at least 90% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO:18 (support found on p. 5 of specification). Since SEQ ID NO:17 was first disclosed in PCT/US99/15810, Applicant shall have priority benefit of the filing date of July 13, 1999. SEQ ID NO:17 was isolated from *Glycine max*. The closest prior art teaches a sequence from *Arabidopsis thaliana* having 76% sequence identity with

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SEQ ID NO:18 (Yamaguchi et al., Plant Physiol., 113(4), 1463-1465, 1997, see result 2 of GenEmbl database search (U) or Table 4, p. 19 of the specification) and does not teach or suggest a sequence having 90% sequence identity. It is understood that Applicant's recited Clustal method of alignment for determining percent sequence identity was calculated using the default parameters set forth on page 19, lines 11-13 of the specification. Sulfate permease is involved in sulfur assimilation to fix environmental sulfur into organic sulfur for use in cellular metabolism (p. 1 of specification). SEQ ID NO:18 contains a complete open reading frame encoding a complete protein (the ATG start codon is at position 71-73 and the termination codon is at 2042-2044 of SEQ ID NO:17). Accordingly, the claimed sequence is novel, has utility and complies with written description and enablement requirements under 35 USC 112, first paragraph.

Any comments considered necessary by Applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

4. Any inquiry concerning this communications from the Examiner should be directed to Phuong Bui, whose telephone number 571-272-0793.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Gary Jones, can be reached at 571-272-0804.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned, for sending official correspondence, is 571-273-8300.

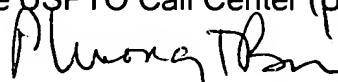
Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight

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(EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet.

The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.



Phuong T. Bui
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1638

09/29/05